



# CHAPA Housing eBriefs

August 9, 2018



## State Updates

### **CHAPA Ends Legislative Session with Some Big Wins and Some More Work to Do**

With the end of the formal legislative session on July 31, there is much to celebrate in state housing policy. This session marked the passage of the \$1.8 billion Housing Bond Bill with increases for the state Low Income Housing Tax Credit and state Historic Tax Credit as well as increases in the [state budget](#) for housing and homelessness prevention programs, including the Massachusetts Rental

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**August 16, 2018**

[Young Professionals Summer Series](#)  
presents: [Winter Gardens in Quincy, MA](#)

**October 2018**

The breakfast forum on innovative building technologies has been postponed until October. Stay tuned!

**December 4, 2018**

[Save the date for CHAPA's 51st Annual](#)

Voucher Program (MRVP) and Residential Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT). In addition, on July 31, the Massachusetts Legislature [passed](#) an Economic Development Bill ([H.4868](#)), which contains a \$250 million capital reauthorization for the MassWorks Infrastructure Development Program. The bill also contains two other CHAPA priorities: creating an Economic Mobility Commission and establishing an exemption for affordable housing nonprofits from mortgage loan originator licensing requirements. The bill is now before the Governor for his signature or vetoes.

The Economic Mobility Commission [established](#) by the Legislature as part of the Economic Development Bill ([H.4868](#)) would help identify the most effective self-sufficiency programs, examine the impact of cliff effects tied to minimum wage increases, and help shape programs that would best assist low-income families to achieve economic mobility and independence. CHAPA worked with the [On Solid Ground Coalition](#) to establish the commission.

While there is much to celebrate, there remains more work to do. This session ended without passage of housing production and zoning reform legislation, despite broad support from legislators, Governor Baker, municipalities, the real estate industry, and affordable housing and smart growth advocates. With a worsening affordable housing crisis, CHAPA is disappointed that no legislation was passed this session. CHAPA will continue to work with the Administration and the Legislature to advocate for the policies and resources necessary to help meet our housing needs.

### **Governor Baker Sends Short-Term Rental Bill Back to Legislature**

On August 1, Governor Baker [returned](#) a bill that regulates and taxes short-term rentals back to the Legislature with changes. The bill would establish a first-in-the-nation statewide registry for short-term rentals like Airbnb, tax such accommodations like motels and hotels, and allow municipalities to impose a fee that must be used, in part, for affordable housing or local infrastructure projects. The

[Dinner!](#)



On July 19th, the CHAPA Young Professionals Group continued its [Summer Series](#) with a walking tour of Salem's [Punto Urban Art Museum](#) hosted by Northshore CDC.



### **Announcement! Deadline Extended**

CHAPA is seeking 2-3 additional communities under our Municipal Engagement Initiative, which seeks to build support for affordable housing production in communities across the Commonwealth. Municipal governments and community organizations are encouraged to apply. *Applicants must submit an electronic copy of the application to Dana LeWinter, Director of Municipal Engagement, at [dlewinter@chapa.org](mailto:dlewinter@chapa.org) by 5 PM on Monday, August 20, 2018.* To learn more, please go to

Governor proposed exempting homeowners who rent their properties 14 nights per year or less from the tax requirements. The future of the bill remains unclear because the Governor acted after the formal legislative session ended, which means the Legislature either has to vote unanimously to accept the bill with the Governor's changes or call a special session to rewrite it.

### **DHCD Awards \$57 Million for Affordable Housing**

On July 25, Governor Baker [announced](#) the 2018 rental housing awards, which will provide \$57 million in housing resources for 19 projects across Massachusetts. The awards will support the construction and preservation of 1,463 homes, including 1,312 affordable homes with 227 homes reserved for very low-income households. The projects include six developments for seniors, three projects to support substantial renovations of public housing, and four transit-oriented developments. Many include homes reserved for formerly homeless families and individuals.

### **2018 Community Development Block Grants Announced**

On July 26, the Baker-Polito Administration [announced](#) the 2018 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Awards, providing more than \$32 million across 41 projects, which will benefit 59 communities and support 280 homes. These awards will enable communities to address local needs by pursuing a variety of housing, community, and economic development projects.

### **LISC Boston Welcomes Karen Kelleher as New Executive Director**

The Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) [named](#) Karen Kelleher, most recently deputy director of MassHousing, as the new executive director of its LISC Boston program. Ms. Kelleher worked previously at the DHCD, The Community Builders, and Nixon Peabody. CHAPA congratulates Ms. Kelleher and looks forward to working with her at LISC Boston.

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[CHAPA's Municipal Engagement Initiative webpage.](#)

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## Federal Updates

### **U.S. Senators Introduce Bills to Provide Rent Relief**

On August 1, Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) introduced the “Housing, Opportunity, Mobility, and Equity (HOME) Act” ([S.3342](#)), which would provide a refundable tax credit to households who spend more than 30% of their income on rent. It would also create a statutory framework to encourage local strategies to increase affordable housing. In July, U.S. Senator Kamala D. Harris (D-CA) [introduced](#) the Rent Relief Act, which would also create a refundable federal tax credit for renters who pay more than 30% of their income on rent. This [chart](#) from the National Low Income Housing Coalition compares the two tax credit proposals.

### **U.S. Senate Passes FY2019 Housing Appropriations Bill**

On August 1, the U.S. Senate [passed](#) the Fiscal Year 2019 Transportation-Housing and Urban Development (T-HUD) appropriations bill, which funds important HUD programs such as Housing Choice Vouchers, Project-Based Rental Assistance and Public Housing, among many others. The U.S. House of Representatives is in recess until September. Advocates hope the House will follow the lead of the Senate and pass a strong HUD funding bill ahead of the September 30th deadline.

### **U.S. House Passes Housing Choice Voucher Mobility Demonstration**

In July, the U.S. House of Representatives [passed](#) the Housing Choice Voucher Mobility Demonstration Act, authorizing the HUD secretary to carry out a demonstration program that would encourage families receiving housing choice vouchers to move to lower-



poverty areas. The bill had broad bipartisan support with a vote of 368-19.

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## Recent Research

### **New White Paper Examines Zoning for ADUs in Massachusetts**

Whether you call them Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), In-Law Apartments, Granny Flats, or Casitas, these add-on apartments within or behind an owner-occupied single family house have recently gained interest among Massachusetts lawmakers. A new [White Paper](#) by Amy Dain examines the strict regulatory landscape in Greater Boston and concludes “if an average of five (in-law apartments) were added annually in each of 100 area cities and towns, 5,000 new apartments would be created in a decade.”

### **CBPP Analyzes Federal Legislation for Possible Rent Increases to HUD Tenants**

The Center for Budget Policies and Priorities (CBPP) has released a [report](#) analyzing a draft House bill that would allow local housing agencies to alter rules used to set rents for certain HUD tenants. Advocates are concerned this bill would harm needy families and lay the groundwork for funding cuts

### **Revisiting the Renters’ Tax Credit**

With two United States Senators introducing new legislation for a renters’ tax credit (see Federal Updates, above), is it time to revisit a project-based tax credit to help stabilize rents for the most vulnerable? This [2017 report](#) from the CBPP outlines how such a policy could work.

## **Chicago Area Alliance Reports on Racial and Economic Segregation**

A [report](#) from the Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance examines the Chicago City Council's exercise of local control through the use of so-called "aldermanic prerogative," a tool that individual alderman can use to override city decisions on housing and zoning. The report links its use to Chicago's racial and economic segregation, in which just 20% of the city's land is currently zoned for multi-family housing, offering a cautionary tale about zoning and local control.

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